

Municipal Council Special Meeting Minutes
Town Hall Auditorium
June 17, 2006

President Lawrence called the special meeting of the Amesbury Municipal Council to order at 9:05 am.

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilor McClure

June 17, 2006

Roll Call – Members present: Donna McClure, Mario Pinierio, Michelle Thone, Roger Benson, Hank Brennick, Ann Connolly King, Robert Lavoie, Alison Lindstrom, and Christopher Lawrence.

President Lawrence explained that anyone wishing to speak during public comment must fill out a speaker request form at the back of the room and give it to the Town Clerk. All of the forms turned in are for the public hearing. He opened the public hearing.

Thatcher W. Kezer, III, Mayor highlighted the three areas that he stated are critical to maintaining the level of services - maintaining the school budget as submitted, to fund the permit coordinator position and to restore cuts that were made by the finance committee to the police budget.

Councilor Lindstrom questioned if impact fees were legal in Massachusetts.

Mayor Kezer explained it can be done but there are restrictions. He cited two court cases which gave guidelines of how it could and could not be done.

Councilor King asked if the chair could review the Kaufman bylaw as she had a question regarding the discussion of a questioned appropriation if the Council can ask questions of department members to speak at that time.

President Lawrence stated he would like to get through the public hearing and then they could answer those questions.

Councilor King stated she would like to know because of questions she might ask.

President Lawrence stated the opportunity to ask questions of department heads is now.

Councilor King asked if he was willing to answer her question at this time.

President Lawrence stated not at this time. He commented that he appointed a finance committee and thanked them for the recommendations.

He also reminded anyone who would like to speak during the public hearing must fill out a speaker request form and give it to the Town Clerk.

Charles Chaurette, Superintendent of Schools spoke on behalf of the School Committee Budget. He stated he was gratified at the support received from the finance committee and its recommendation to

approve the budget as delivered by the Mayor and hoped the Municipal Council would also support the proposed budget.

Matthew Sherrill, Zoning Board of Appeals Chairman, spoke in favor and the necessity of keeping the Permitting Coordinator position in the budget of Economic Development. He explained the problems that would occur without the permitting coordinator especially since the budget had been cut to what would only cover a secretary to record and type minutes.

Councilor Thone stated should the permitting coordinator not be funded, she would suggest to the Mayor that he submit a supplemental budget to reinstate some of the funds for the secretarial position so the Zoning Board could hire a secretary.

Councilor Connolly King stated the meetings between the Mayor and the Council's leadership are set up to share projects and ideas that are in the brewing and seeing that the Council President only went to one of the meetings and has cancelled further meetings, this is an example where communication fails and problems arise.

Councilor Lavoie stated the other aspect of the zoning board business is the impact on the ordinary citizenry that need relief from the board to do home improvement projects. Without a permit coordinator there could be a serious impact to the ordinary citizen when they try to get garages or decks, etc.

Councilor Pinierio stated the permit coordinator would make the process a lot easier for everyone.

President Lawrence stated that when he e-mailed the Mayor to postpone the monthly meetings it was due to work conflicts and until a time that would work better for the council vice president and himself, meetings would be scheduled on an as needed basis. The budget was presented to the Council prior to his rescheduling of the meetings.

Councilor Thone stated she supported the Council President's decision to make those meetings as an as needed basis. She stated her telephone does outgoing calls but also accepts incoming calls. She stated the last Council President McMilleon never met with the Mayor.

Jon Brickett, Deputy Fire Chief, spoke in favor of the keeping the Permitting Coordinator, restoring cuts proposed by finance committee for the Police Department budget and Fire Department budget.

Councilor Thone thanked the fire department by a small change in their deployment plan cut their overtime in half.

Richard Clark, Emergency Management Director, spoke on the Amesbury Disaster Planning Group and the inclusion of many departments, Anna Jaques Hospital and the Red Cross. His concern is the chipping away of some of the essential things needed that there will be a cause and effect on what departments are doing. He spoke in favor of the fire department budget, restoring cuts to the police department and the affect it would have on the emergency disaster planning those cuts would have.

(Request by Councilor Thone to transcribe the portion of the public hearing with Chief Cronin as close to verbatim as possible)

Michael Cronin, Police Chief, stated he was going to talk to the Council about the budget related to numbers and not a lot about the needs of public safety in the community as he believes everyone is aware of that. "This is basically about numbers and taxes and what we can afford and what we are willing to buy for services. The budget recommendation submitted by the Mayor was a budget based on cuts to my

recommendation that put us back to the bare minimum that we can operate at and meet our contractual and legal obligations. The proposed cuts by the finance committee go beyond that level and basically budget us at a 150,000.00 approximate deficit beneath our contractual and legal obligations. I submitted a budget to the Mayor requesting forty-two and one-half police personnel including sworn in civilians. The Mayor cut that back to thirty-eight personnel and recommended his three million eleven thousand dollar budget for personnel services which is approximately ninety percent of my budget. I recommended that he not do that based on the fact that operating at bare minimum increases our potential losses in overtime and recall and items like that whenever we suffer loss of personnel, vacancies on shift due to illnesses, sickness and whatever. He decided to maintain what we are doing now and operate at the bare minimum, regardless. I then looked at the finance committees recommendation and the number they recommended for part one or personnel services as we call it now, it appears to me that the finance committee took the fiscal '06 personnel services bottom line and subtracted from it the fiscal '07 recommendations that I made to the Mayor of forty-nine thousand, nine-seventy-two for the domestic violence coordinator and another twenty-one thousand, eight hundred, sixty-seven for the computer consultant. They then reached a new bottom line of two million, eight hundred and six thousand, zero sixty-four, the finance committee then added three percent to their new bottom line number and came up with two million, eight hundred ninety thousand, and two hundred fifty dollars. That was the recommendation that I saw in the fiscal '07 finance committee presentation to this council. Unfortunately, that number is low for several reasons; first, the police department didn't spend seventy-one thousand, eight hundred and thirty-nine dollars in fiscal '06 on that domestic violence coordinator and that computer consultant position. The police department spent thirty-four thousand and forty-six dollars on those two positions because those two positions were both laid off during the course of the year in addition to the hundred and twenty-five thousand dollar cut that we took last year in the basic budget. We had some issues during the year including two extended illnesses, an extended injury, a pregnancy, and several people leaving the department that caused the department to go into mandated overtime expense. Those positions were laid off to make up additional losses in our budget. Third, the two hundred, eighty-seven thousand, nine hundred and three dollar personnel services bottom line for fiscal six had the hundred and twenty-five thousand dollar cut included but did not take into consideration that this current year's budget is also in deficit as a result of not having depth in personnel. We don't have people to fill in and cover shifts and meet our contractual obligations; we are hiring people at overtime. The fourth reason and the biggest reason the number is incorrect is that the finance committee did not include the fixed cost increases into this current fiscal '07 budget beyond the three percent raise that was reached with the unions. If you do that and use the finance committees own method of calculating, then what you would do is take the \$2,877,903 that was fiscal '06 and subtract out the \$34,046 that was actually spent in fiscal '06, that would give you a new subtotal of \$2,843,857. The finance committee then added the three percent raise but they did not add the increase in longevity, they did not add the increase in education incentive and they did not increases in clothing allowances, all fixed contractual items. When you do add all of those numbers to the bottom line what you get is a new number of \$3,025,144.00 using the finance committees own method of calculation. Unfortunately, I can't recommend to you that you adopt that number because you can't increase the Mayor's recommendation, as we all know. So, obviously, my recommendation to you is that you adopt the Three million eleven thousand and change that the Mayor has recommended for part one in the police budget. If you don't, the town will have two choices; the choices will be to violate the contract and go below the contractual obligation or violate the law and not pay people overtime. In either event we will lose those charges that will be brought either at an unfair labor practice charged before the state or a wage charge before the department of labor and the litigation costs that go along with it. I will assure you that it will be far more than \$150,000 in the whole. Relative to expenses, the only thing I can tell you is that our expenses are relatively flat. Costs go up on everything. I submitted \$260,000; you cut that another \$30,000. It is unlikely that we will make expenses. Basically, what the finance committee did is looked at numbers that were not spent in the current year and said; well they don't need that number so they cut it back. What they didn't do is look at the big spending numbers,

gasoline, things like that that went up. We've cut back everything we can to try to make our expense budget come in this year. The third portion that you cut was the cruisers and the Tasers. I still recommend that you buy three cruisers. That doesn't mean we run out and buy them July first but the money should be in the budget so that when we need the cars we can replace the cars during the year. The Tasers are safety equipment that I recommended to the finance committee and to the Mayor. I can just tell you that one of the injuries that we had this year, the officer was injured last October, he's still on injury leave, that one injury has cost this town well over one hundred thousand dollars to date and had we been implementing and using Tasers at that time, I doubt that injury would have occurred. So, I think that's short money to spend; it's a piece of safety equipment for the officers and is something I recommend that you adopt. That's basically all I have to tell you at this time and I will be happy to entertain any questions that you have."

Councilor Lawrence asked for questions from the committee or the public.

Councilor Connolly King asked the Chief, "In Mayor Kezer's first cut to the Police Department budget two police positions went unfunded, correct?"

Chief Cronin stated that was correct. There are two vacancies in the department at present. He recommended those positions be filled again because they fill out the shift compliment. They are required under the safety clause in their contract to maintain a minimum number of officers on patrol. Without those two positions, every time someone is out on vacation, sick leave, training, injured or what-not they're dropping down into overtime situation. They do meet the minimum obligations without those positions; it just creates risk when people are missing. If there is a perfect year and nobody leaves and nobody gets sick and nobody gets injured and everything goes under normal circumstances they will just about make it. He stated in his opinion, the Mayor's recommendation is about ten to fifteen thousand dollars under but the finance committee's is about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars under.

Councilor Connolly King stated over the last four years we've lost the school resource officer, the rape officer and now two positions that are not being funded.

Chief Cronin stated he's also lost a part time clerk, the administrative assistant and communications coordinator was combined into one job, they've lost two police officers, the domestic violence coordinator, and the school resources officer.

Councilor Connolly King asked the Chief to briefly address the domestic violence issue in our town. She stated the Chief had presented to the finance committee some of the statistics regarding our community.

Chief Cronin: "Obviously, we have a domestic violence in this community. We were doing some things that were a little bit ahead of the curve with our domestic coordinator. It's true that we have stepped up to the line of social services combined with law enforcement which is the recommendation of the forward thinking people in the nation regarding domestic violence. Were we one of the first in the area to have a domestic violence coordinator? Yes, we were. Did we develop principles and methods of procedure that other departments and the courts, in fact, are now using? Yes, we did but the question here is money. It comes down to a choice of you want to buy what services you want to buy. Amesbury has 34-37 percent of all the domestic violence cases in a nine town region. That is not a secret. I have said that before you people before, it's been in the newspapers. You know of the bodies that have piled up in serious domestic violence incidents. I believe we've got five people in four years dead in domestic violence related incidents in comparison to, everybody's comparing cities and towns all the time, let's compare us to Boston. Boston had one domestic violence related death in the last two years; we've had five in the last four years. They've got a hundred and forty-something shootings this year so far and over twenty

homicides, so obviously they have a bigger problem in a huge community compared to us and yet look at our numbers on domestic violence. But, again, it comes down to money. Keeping that domestic violence coordinator cost to the average taxpayer is seven dollars and fifty cents to eight dollars a year.

Councilor Connolly King stated for many years the cruisers were in a placement rotation and it was taken out of sync a number of years ago and clearly we saw the financial problems that came about by not going with that rhythm of replacing the cruisers. Her concerns are is an increase in maintenance costs because we are keeping the cruisers past the time that we get maintenance repairs so then the town owns the repair of the cruisers. She stated she had concerns regarding the front line officers driving in cruisers that are one hundred miles plus and the problem with the cruisers is that they are driven by a variety of people, not just one owner / operator driving the car so there is lots of wear and tear on the cruises. There is a huge liability, first, to the welfare of the people because if we have issues of cruisers having problems being able to respond to incidents and the safety of the officers in the cruisers, themselves.

Chief Cronin: "The reason for funding the cruisers in the budget is to give me the opportunity to replace; I have three front line cruisers that will cross that hundred thousand mark during fiscal '07. What you want to do is you want to be in a position to buy your cars when you need them and often times you can buy them on the split or the end of the year. You can buy a previous year's model that's left over but new. It doesn't matter to us what year it is if it is new; it serves our purposes quite well and you can get a better deal on them. We have a lot of cars that say 2005 in our vehicle inventory right now. People are counting the 2005's and thinking that we have all these cars that we bought last year. We bought them at a split between the two fiscal years, so we bought two for 2006, two for 2005 and three in 2004 including the cruiser I replaced myself, the car that was nine years old. The reality is that our front line cruisers, we have three that will approach one hundred thousand miles or be over that in fiscal '07 and those cars should be replaced on a regular basis. Several years ago, I think it was fiscal '04, '03 to '04; we were spending upwards of sixty to seventy thousand dollars in repairing and replacing these cars because we hadn't bought the cars so we were spending it on maintenance and repairs. So, you buy the cars either way, you buy them by pieces or buy them whole.

Councilor Thone: "Are you and Lieutenant considered supervisory staff?"

Chief Cronin: "No."

Councilor Thone: "You are what, administration?"

Chief Cronin: "My status is professional employee, he is a management employee."

Councilor Thone: "And that's not considered supervisory staff?"

Chief Cronin: "No."

Councilor Thone: "In looking back at overtime, overtime shift coverage, recall time, training overtime, in '03 we had thirty three sworn officers"

Chief Cronin: "Correct."

Councilor Thone: "Today we have thirty-one"

Chief Cronin: "Correct"

Councilor Thone: "Two more officers in '03 and are all of them items? There as much if not slightly higher than what we have today. If less officers creates more overtime, why is it when we had more officers we have about the same amount of overtime?"

Chief Cronin: "Well, I don't think you will if you look at this year's overtime compared to those numbers it's not going to be the same."

Councilor Thone: "I've added them up, '03 and where we are today in '05 where we had thirty-two officers, you were one less."

Chief Cronin: "I haven't added up '03 to '06 but if you do, I will guarantee you that the overtime numbers including the deficit will be far greater than the '03 numbers. I don't know if you added the \$110,000 deficit in."

Councilor Thone: "I think that, well, isn't it true that part of that is relative to the flood?"

Chief Cronin: "Yes, \$36,000."

Councilor Thone: "Okay, I'm not seeing the dramatic decline from the thirty three officers to the thirty-one officers. We should have paid less in overtime with more officers and especially four years ago where there salaries were at least nine percent or greater less."

Chief Cronin: "Well, you would have to look at each individual year and look at the circumstances involved with that year. Police services are not something that run on an even keel. I can tell you that we had several shootings during some of those years. Those are very costly in initial response and in follow up legal services but without sitting down and analyzing the comparison you can't just sit there and say I added this number and this number so this is out of skew. I'm just telling you that the less people you have."

Councilor Thone: "It does raise the question though. It does raise the question."

Chief Cronin: "And the question can be answered if you want to give me the time. I'll have to go back to the office and write that up and come back and give it to you."

Councilor Thone: "We will sit down, we absolutely will. There's a lot of questions, actually and between this and the next budget that we will certainly have answered. Okay, we can answer those when we sit down, but we are looking at \$255,000 of a cut; \$100,000 of that was capital, which is your cruisers and your Tasers which the finance committee chose not to fund."

Chief Cronin: "Recommended not to fund."

Councilor Thone: "So, as you said, \$155,000 less the Mayor's budget, in our discussions at the finance committee, we asked you questions about \$90,000 worth of special revenue funds and the answers that I received in general were that those dollars could be used for pretty much just about anything."

Chief Cronin: "No, the dollars related to the community policing money, \$45,000 can be used for any law enforcement related item, not \$90,000...."

Councilor Thone: "Okay, so you can apply, there was about \$90,000 totaled. There were several funds that totaled about \$90,000, maybe a little higher that you have access to. So, if we look at the \$155,000

and we take off the \$90,000, we are looking at \$65,000 and looking at the expenses we clearly made cuts in your expenses or I believe there's at least that amount in there that, you know, creatively, thinking out of the box, maybe working the overtime a little harder, we can certainly make that up. I don't, if there's a lay off it may be one but honestly, based on the finance committee's recommendation, I would be surprised if we even saw that if you really worked hard to make this budget work. I just want to say that the last few years the schools have been the ones to take the hit. This year we made that a priority that the schools were going to be a priority. We had to get that money somewhere else. The income level for this community does not support the tax burden and the way to correct that is not to force people that can't afford to live in this town out of this town and so people that can afford it, move in and our income levels rise. The people that live in this community should be able to afford to stay here. We have to make cuts and something that has been brought up over and over again is perhaps the unions going back to the table and looking at the health benefits. We pay almost five million dollars a year in health benefits. We are asking you to work with us. We can save probably up to a million dollars with changing the co-pay slightly which would decrease premiums and then go into 70 – 30 which would help balance some of that increase that you might see in your premium costs. All we are asking for is that you people just please work with us because we cannot sustain this. We don't want to lay off officers. We don't want to lay off firemen. That's all I have to say. Thank you."

Chief Cronin: "I would like to respond to that."

Councilor Thone: "Okay."

Chief Cronin: "Because, first, you said the majority of the cuts in the last few years has been the school department. I don't want to pit one department here against another but that's an inaccurate statement. The largest cuts made in this town last year were to the police department as they were the year before. So, that's not correct. Second, I don't have the option to lay somebody off here. You have reduced the number of personnel to the minimum levels I have available to meet my contractual obligations. If I lay off a dispatcher I have to hire a cop to fill the position at time and a half. If I lay off of a cop I have to hire another cop to fill the position at time and a half. That's the road we are going down now. If someone gets injured I have to hire someone to replace him at time and a half. I don't have any people left to do that with. You are talking to me about health care costs. I don't control the health care costs for the entire working community and town employees in Amesbury. That's an issue for the whole broad spectrum, not me. Previous boards talked about, and you did it just now, go back to the table and negotiate. That's all well and good and you can do that and you can do all of that. What I am telling you is they hand me a contract and say, "There's your job, implement that contract, implement public safety services, implement police services." I have to follow the contract. I have to follow the law. I don't have a choice. That budget that you submitted, those numbers that you, that ninety thousand in revenue that you so easily threw around, too, 10,9,8,7,6, and 5 is 11. That doesn't make it true. You can say all of these things that you want but the numbers are the numbers and they are there for a reason. They are there because they are priced out on what the contract requires. Abraham Lincoln stood before the Illinois legislature one hundred and fifty years ago and said, "How many legs does a horse have?" And they said "Four." He said, "If you count the tail how many legs does it then have?" They said, "oh, five." He said, "No, it still has four legs no matter what you call it, it's still four legs." You are doing the same thing here."

Councilor Thone: "Well, I just think with twenty-two officers and seven sergeants, that's twenty-nine officers that based on the way I looked at the staffing, and forgive me if I am off but I looked at it hard and over and over again that we will meet that obligation. The other concern is that there's been a lot of analysis done, some by private citizens, on other communities and I can't understand why communities of

our size can fund a police department for up to a million dollars less and with sometimes four to eight officers less. Have you looked at other?"

Chief Cronin: "Yes, I have and I can tell you."

Councilor Thone: "We are the only one other than Newburyport and I think they are even a little less than us but every other community is funding on average a million dollars less and four to eight police officers less."

Chief Cronin: "Well, I can tell you that if you look at the scheduling that you talk about that you will not meet those obligations during the year without getting into that overtime unless everything goes absolutely perfectly and then you have to have every single person. We are going to enter July 1st with an injured officer. He is not back yet from last October, so right off the bat we are down one slot there, we don't have the two vacant positions filled, so you are down three. That creates three holes on the schedule. The minutes someone goes out on vacation, sick leave, all of the things that they go out for, you are looking at hiring people on overtime. The same thing exists in dispatch. We staff one dispatcher per shift. That's it, the minute that person is missing we have to replace them on overtime."

Councilor Thone: "I agree with you on the dispatchers. I think you are down to the bare minimum, absolutely."

Chief Cronin: "The same principle applies with the police. I know you don't agree but you..."

Councilor Thone: "Well, I can't understand and I don't want to really debate and take up everybody's time but, why other communities and we're looking at up maybe twenty or more communities can staff four to eight less and for a million dollars less and I think we are absolutely part of that reason is that we are bound by this minimum staffing requirement and if other communities can do it."

Chief Cronin: "Many communities have staffing levels in their contracts. What usually drives staffing levels in contracts are disputes between the unions and frankly, the public officials, as yourselves. When the unions get to the point where they feel that their safety is in jeopardy, they will negotiate a safety clause into their contract rather than take large raises. That exists in many communities across the state, not just us. But the reality is, relative to comparing departments to departments, I looked at one that was put into the newspapers this year. That's fine; the person wrote this big extensive letter about all the comparisons between us and Braintree. The problem is it was all baloney, it was all wrong. None of the information in it was correct. So how do you refute that? You are saying you look at other departments. Well, do you know if the cruisers are included in the budget or out of the budget? Do you know if gasoline is; many police departments don't include gasoline, building and maintenance, insurance, whatever. We have all of these items that are in the budget; they are itemized. Relative to the staffing, you clearly can see it with dispatch because it is one position and you understand that. I've offered to have a meeting with all of you people and go into detail, item by item, how this department is staffed, why and how it works. You declined to come over for that. I don't know what to tell you."

Councilor Lawrence: "Other questions for the Chief? Councilor McClure."

Councilor McClure: "Chief, understand that data can be confusing and I did poll seventeen communities. I telephoned seven of them to make sure that I was clear that we weren't cars in, cars out, gas in, gas out. So, I found seven exactly, except for a crime index that was off a little bit, two were higher, the rest were lower and I spoke to the Chief and anybody who would talk to me at those departments. \$2.6 million was as close as I could come to a community of our size based on their staffing and there was a variety, one

Chief, one Lieutenant; one Chief, two Sergeants but the numbers at the end of the day, ours were higher in people by a couple not by a great amount but our budget was almost a million dollars more so when I asked one of the Finance Committee members to sit down with the Lieutenant and go over some of these communities so that we could be clear again, there was no response and refused to sit down and go over these communities. So, I did call them personally. I did sort out the data. I didn't just take what was in the DOR's, Cities & Town's, and Boston.com. I didn't just rely on one source of data and did go right to the source. The bottom line is we are paying a lot more than any other community of our size and I would love to sit down and have a meeting with you so we can go through where that disconnect is."

Chief Cronin: "Did you look at the contractual obligations?"

Councilor McClure: "I talked to them about them. I didn't see all their contracts. I did speak to the Chief's about their obligations and four ten hour shifts was a disconnect for some, not all."

Chief Cronin: "Well, actually, I know that there are some communities no that are going to the four and four schedule as we did initially back in 1990 as a way of saving money, as a way of delaying raises and as a way of spreading personnel out a little bit differently. Initially, the four and four schedule, this is not something the union rammed down the town's throat. There seems to be that perception with some people. That schedule was a negotiated item that the Town was very, very happy to get in 1990. They were very happy to get that schedule. Go back and read the newspaper articles at the time and they'll talk about the cooperation between the union and the community in tough financial times. I've been around long enough to remember this stuff. I was there when it happened. It wasn't a one sided deal. The reality is what you need to look at is the contractual obligations. When I submit my budget I break out the contractual obligations item by item and I put them into the budget and I identify the people, the salaries, where the money is going and I go right by the contract. I don't have a lot of choice. I know there are a lot of people that say change the health insurance for the town. Do I think the health insurance has an impact on the total cost of the employees in this town? Huge impact, huge impact but at my level implementing a police contract that is not something that I control or deal with. I control and deal with our legal and contractual obligations in our contracts. If you want to sit down and change the contract then you need to do that at the executive level with the unions. Give me a contract that says something different and I'll implement it but I don't have the authority which I want to make that clear to everybody here. I don't have that authority to go over to the police department next week and say, "Boys and girls we're going to change the way we do things here, from now on you work six days on and one day off and I'm not going to pay any more overtime." Can I cut the budget doing that? Sure, I can. It won't last long, obviously. I have to implement the contract I have. We are at the minimum to meet our legal obligation. If you people vote the cut of the finance committee, you will be in deficit. It is my job to tell you that and I'm telling you that."

Councilor McClure: "Also, the Council does not approve any union contracts. It's purely the Mayor's responsibility. This Council never signs off on it, so, understand that we just got copies of the contract Bonni provided us earlier this year with all the union contracts but the Council does not authorize that money for spending. It doesn't come before us at all."

Chief Cronin: "I think the reason for that is because Chapter 150 E is pretty clear on who negotiates contracts and who represents the Town. You are the legislative side of the government and he's the executive side of the government and the reality is that it is hard enough to get contracts with unions when you are dealing with one entity. If I sit a union lawyer and a union president and union vice-president here and all nine of you people there we'll never have a contract because no one will agree with anything. That is the reality."

Councilor McClure: "That's true."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor Benson."

Councilor Benson: "I would just like to say something regarding the budget as a whole. This issue has, and it's certainly an issue on both ends of our police budget being out of line with communities of like sizes, come up repeatedly over the last several years. I think what needs to happen rather than cutting of the budget short term, what needs to happen is something like what we did in the fire department. Either we set up a committee or we do some sort of a study and really look at what is different about our police department because it's exceptional and they provide excellent services and what are the costs associated with those services; and when we look at cutting the budget, say, okay, we're not going to do this or we're not going to do this, so that we approach it more intelligently rather than just a straight up reduction of the budget. I think that will put this debate to rest that's gone on for years now about the police budget being out of line. I certainly don't think that just reducing the budget is the solution. I would be supportive on doing something on that right away because it does need to happen. Thank you."

Chief Cronin: "You can do that but I will tell you that one of the reasons and one of the primary reasons is when you compare department to department Amesbury is an accredited department. We function under strict accredited regulations. Many departments do not; it's not that easy to get accredited. So, that is going to account for many of the regulations that we meet. I would welcome someone to come in and compare us to those seven departments that Councilor McClure picked out. I would like to know how many of those departments are accredited. I would like to know how many provide all the rest of those services. Fine, if you want to spend the money to do that, be my guest."

Councilor Benson: "Right, that's exactly what I am talking about. It would change the debate to "Can we afford the cost of that?" And that's what I think the debate should be not this bickering back and forth about numbers; a real understanding of what it costs to have a better department and are those better services affordable, worth it and a priority to this community. Do you understand what I am saying?"

Chief Cronin: "Absolutely."

Ann Connolly King: "I just wanted to mention the cut to the police department was \$125,000 and again last year the schools were spared and believe me I have a real issue with pitting one department against another department I don't think that does anything for our community but the police department has been cut significantly over the past couple of years. As the Chief said we are under contractual obligations a contract has been signed. It's a legal document that we have to abide by. We can take the choice in funding under that but clearly, either we are going to spend the cost in overtime and once we deplete that overtime we are going to end up in litigation with the unions. So, I have to ask is this a wise course to go knowing what the outcome of the cuts will be and is that in the best interest of our community. Down the road, when the contract's renegotiated I do think there's room for re-looking at various aspects of all of our contracts. That needs to be addressed but here, today, it's out of our control and we have to abide by the legality of it."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor Brennick"

Councilor Brennick: "One quick thing of note, here we have a budget for the police department in excess of three million dollars and that doesn't even have the benefits cost in it. Probably benefits for that department alone are close to a million dollars, so that brings it up to a four million dollar budget for that department."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor Pinierio"

Councilor Pinierio: "Chief, you said four days on and four days off was in the contract in 1990?"

Chief Cronin: "Yes, 1990."

Councilor Pinierio: "So, that's been in effect, so in other words, the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager at that time okayed that contract to go four days on and four days off and that's been in every contract up to today?"

Chief Cronin: "I believe it was the Town Manager. I think we were a Town Manager form of government with a Board of Selectmen at that time. That's correct."

Councilor Pinierio: "Also, you came in front of us one other time and you said you could manage your department better if you had five eight hour days. Is that a true statement?"

Chief Cronin: "No, that is not a true statement. I said that the coverage is different. Since I have been the Chief, which is twenty-five years, we have never had a schedule of five 8 hour days. That's not a common police schedule because police work their schedule regardless of holidays or weekends or that type of thing. Five day schedules make it difficult to give everybody weekends off. Police typically work either four and two, six and three, things like that. The four and four schedule, however, is becoming more common. The other thing that the town did is they negotiated some time into that contract for training as well. We still have a thirty-seven and a half hour week. Every officer still works 1950 hours now. We are not leaking any time on the other end. The question here now is simply that we have no depth of personnel. We have no place to go if somebody is out without hiring overtime. We have a small reserve force that are available occasionally and even contractually then. I can use them some of the time and I make use of them at every opportunity. The other thing you need to understand is years ago, and some departments are still doing it and getting away with it, I operated a police department that had, well in 1979 before I was chief even the town of Amesbury had twenty-three police officers. We've got thirty-one today. I don't know how many of you were around here in 1979 but think what's on 110 now and what was there twenty something years ago. It's a lot more now and we haven't had a huge increase in the number of sworn personnel as related to increases in houses, business, school activity and everything else but the reality is that back in those days we had a very loose contract regarding the use of reserves. I had reserves in one bank and regulars in another. We never, ever hired anybody on overtime to fill a shift, never, unless all those people were sick in bed and dying. They were all looking for work. I can't do that today. Over the years that reserve force was negotiated away. Regular sworn officers fill their own work now. Part of that reason is contract negotiations but a bigger part of the reason now is we have to train reserves to such a level of competence it costs just as much in the long run if you train somebody, put all that money into it and then you can't find them to work because they're reserves. At least I can order my own people in. I can't order a guy that works for me one day a month to do things. So, it hasn't been practical in the last eight or ten years. Before that we had eight, nine reserve officers available. We don't have that now and we can't get those officers now."

Councilor Pinierio: "Thank you, Chief."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor King, do you have a question for the Chief?"

Councilor Connolly King: "Actually, a comment regarding adding the insurance. We should do that to every department, so that would bump up everybody's department. But that's just a known reality and not an exception. Back to when they did the ten and four's, I believe that was done because at that time in

the nineties the Police Department had gone without raises and that was part of the negotiation because the town at that time could not provide a raise in that contract and that's why that negotiation was made."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor McClure."

Councilor McClure: "Just one more question. Of the Police Departments in Massachusetts and I know we have three hundred fifty-one communities, towns and cities, I don't know how many police departments that is. Do you know off the top of your head?"

Chief Cronin: "No, I don't believe every city and town has its own police department. Out in the western part of the state there are groups of towns that don't have police departments."

Councilor McClure: "There are a total of fifteen accredited departments and we are one of them."

Chief Cronin: "Correct."

Councilor McClure: "And that's, I look at as something to be very proud of that we are accredited. My concern is, is that the difference?"

Chief Cronin: "It's part of the difference, absolutely. Twenty-five years ago we used people that were trained to a lesser level. We don't do that today. But then again, if you look at some of the towns, I don't want to point fingers at any particular town but there's one town where a police officer made a bonehead move and it ended up costing the town seven or eight hundred dollars in a law suit as a result of it that they had to go back and appropriate over a number of years to cover. I will point out to you that we have not been devoid of lawsuits in the twenty-five years I have been chief, however, we have never lost one."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor Lavoie."

Councilor Lavoie: "Does being accredited have any direct financial benefit?"

Chief Cronin: "It has a financial benefit in reduced insurance cost with MIIA and things like that, but is it in the hundreds of thousands of dollars? No, it isn't. What it is though, where it really puts you to the forefront is just last year we got sued by a woman who charged us with false arrest and false imprisonment because we locked her up on a warrant after she crossed the bridge into Newburyport. She took us all the way to federal court, twenty-two counts. The Judge threw out twenty and decided to allow her to try two of those charges looking for millions of dollars. The insurance company offered to settle for fifteen thousand. I was happy when they didn't because that's nuisance value but we have no control over it if we don't give her the fifteen grand and then we lose in court and then we are on the hook for the million. So, we always pay the nuisance value if the insurance company offers it. She turned it down. We litigated the case. We are an accredited department. These are the procedures we followed, here's our booking procedure, here's the film from when she was looked up, here's a copy of the booking, here's the officers training records, here's the state law that allows the officer to arrest someone across the town line, regardless of whether she's in Newburyport, it's a warrant. All of that information was there and presented. The Town Attorney's came in, argued the case and the woman lost. She got zero from the jury. They were out a short period of time. She threw herself off the bench onto the federal floor. I warned them that they better be careful, she'll sue them next. We won the case because we had all our ducks in order. They had nothing to pick apart. Everything they put up there, we refuted and proved that they were wrong. We've won every single lawsuit we've ever taken into court. As you know, we work in the legal venue. We are one of the most risky departments. I don't advocate operating to the bone, operating as cheap as you can to get by. You might save a hundred thousand dollars here; you'll lose two

million on the other end. It's not worth it. I'd be happy to sit down and do actual comparisons with departments, I'd be happy to meet with all of you people. I would be happy to discuss with somebody from outside how we are spending this money. I can tell you where we are spending the money. Come, I'll show you exactly where."

Councilor Lawrence: "Councilor McClure, Councilor Thone."

Councilor Thone: "How many officers do you need to staff a twenty-four hour period?"

Chief Cronin: "I'm not going to discuss that with you here, as far as details. I offered to do that in executive session. If you want to call that now I will be happy to do that."

Councilor Thone: "That's very relative to minimum staffing requirements."

Chief Cronin: "Well, 4-4-6-3 is the number. That's the public side of it"

Councilor Thone: "Within the contract it also denotes time."

Chief Cronin: "Yes, 4-4 first four, second six evening...."

Councilor Thone: "And that calculates to twenty-two the way I believe I calculated it. Is it twenty-two to do the four on three off? Is it four on three off?"

Chief Cronin: "No, it's four on four off."

Councilor Thone: "Four on four off and I calculated that through to be twenty-two just to staff."

Chief Cronin: "That's twenty-two patrol positions and Sergeants."

Councilor Thone: "Right, to do four on four off for the twenty-four hour period."

Chief Cronin: "I have all of that in detail as I said, I would be happy to provide to you but not in public."

Councilor Thone: "I just want to make, I think, a final comment and just thank you for being here today and going through all these questions. I appreciate it."

Chief Cronin: "It's a great day, isn't it?"

Councilor Lawrence: "I think there's one more, Councilor Brennick."

Councilor Brennick: "Just a point of clarification to Councilor King's statement on health benefits. They do show in the school budget, that was changed in '02 or '03 and it does show in the water and sewer. So, that's where the figures show and as I state there's about a million dollars that goes to the police department in benefits."

Councilor Lawrence: "Thank you, is there any questions for the Chief at this time?"

Resident: "A comment?"

Councilor Lawrence: "Sure, do you want to come up here and state your name and address, please?"

Libby Arsenault: "Libby Arsenault, 118 Elm Street. I came here really to speak on the school budget issue but I feel so compelled to say something now, I can't keep my mouth quiet. My husband and I moved here two years ago from East Boston, and we moved here to have a safe neighborhood to raise our children in and in East Boston we couldn't walk out the door without seeing a drug deal going on or there was a teenage girl fatally shot right around the corner from our house. I just wanted to thank the police department for the wonderful job they have done here. We feel like we have died and gone to heaven, it's such a safe community and I would fear that any budget cuts might compromise the safety that we feel."

Don Swenson, Deputy Director of Emergency Management wanted to let the Towns people know about the "12 dirty dozen", all volunteers who receive no compensation. He stated they are a great volunteer organization. He is concerned that they do not receive insurance because Emergency Management does not have it in their budget to purchase insurance. He stated that if they got hurt they would be on their own.

Councilor Pinierio asked if the volunteers sign a document that the Town is not responsible if they get hurt.

Mr. Swenson stated they do have disclaimers.

Joseph Fahey, Director of Community and Economic Development spoke on the position of the permit coordinator as there was some misunderstanding of the position and how it worked. He reminded the Council that this position covers the ZBA, Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. He explained that prior to this budget; the Town of Amesbury was paying \$34,000 a year for those secretarial positions. Even at that time there were problems and challenges with projects being approved that shouldn't be approved, difficulties with developers not getting all of the information that they needed for a project prior to the permitting process. Property owners have had to go to four or five different departments before they could finally get to the right department to get answers to what they needed to do. In one in particular case, an individual had finally got everything done, had their permits ready and were about to begin site work and suddenly they were stopped because somebody forgot to tell them that the tree that was going to be coming down was actually a public tree and a public hearing was needed and consequently the project had to stop for thirty days. He stated he brought this up to show the system wasn't working before. The system had a lot of difficulties and currently the town is under appeal for certain projects. Over the past five years the Planning Board has gone through five secretaries, primarily because they could not go to all the Planning Boards at night, do all the work for the minutes and do all the relative work as far as setting agendas, posting meetings, notifying abutters, submitting plans for review, submitting revised plans for review, advertising meetings and getting the reviews back to the different boards and commissions to make sure a decent project came as a result of the process. He stated that currently there is someone is primarily taking the minutes and transcribing the minutes. They are not doing anything relative to the posting of the meetings, etc. That person is also going to temporarily going to take over the ZBA work temporarily until the situation gets resolved and hopefully, this position gets approved. He stated that out of that \$34,000 they came up with approximately \$12,000 that will cover that particular job and those particular works with the remainder being along with \$8,000 going towards the work of the permit coordinator to actually make sure that we do work together and make sure we give the right answers to the right persons at the right time and do not find projects that are coming into town that are costing us money. He stated he thinks this is a valuable position, not only for the larger projects but for those in this community that expect help when they come in for their one little project that they have never done before and all they want is to get that done.

Councilor Lawrence asked Mr. Fahey if this job is something that he or Deb Carey could do.

Mr. Fahey stated not with the existing work that they are doing at this time. He said they are doing the best they can but things are getting by them and the amount of time and effort spent on this job will be a full time position to do it properly.

Councilor King stated in prior discussion a member of the Council mentioned a reorganization of your department as potentially finding funds within that department. She asked if anyone had discussed the reorganization of the department with him.

Mr. Fahey stated he had not heard anything other than what he has seen in the paper.

Councilor King cautioned members of the council basing their decision on a potential reorganization that has not been discussed with Mr. Fahey and the Council.

Councilor Lindstrom stated she was dismayed because she really believes the permitting coordinator is necessary and she remembered a Councilor saying that part of the problem is a lack of communication and that the President and Vice President should have gone to a meeting and they would have found out about this position. She stated that she wouldn't have found out about it and if the President or Vice President had sent an email it would have been considered a serial email. She would have liked to hear about the position and how the secretary positions were being decimated, virtually eliminated in order to create a position that was funded in once in the Economic and Development line item and another time in the Planning Board line item. She is dismayed by the lack of communication there and there is a lack of communication to the Council so they don't know what they are funding. She stated she doesn't think it was clear to the finance committee exactly what the ramifications were within the Planning Board, ZBA, Con Com and Economic & Development.

Councilor Thone stated she thinks that sometimes if you reorganize your priorities and work responsibilities that sometimes, there is a possibility that the permit coordinator could fit within Mr. Fahey's budget if there was some reorganization with priorities and responsibilities. It is her understanding that the project coordinator position pretty much bloomed from what it was initially proposed to be.

Mr. Fahey stated the project coordinator's position has existed for a number of years, approximately 12 years, it was eliminated for a number of years due to budget cuts and then was put back they are able to initiate a lot more of the work they need to get done.

Councilor Thone stated that perhaps he should look at some of the responsibilities and priorities and reorganize that perhaps the fallout could be the permit coordinator. Her position is the Town's budget is 80-90% personnel and if personnel is getting cut in other areas then she is not going to be adding it in community and economic development or anywhere else for that fact. She stated the bottom line is the bottom line and we all have to live with it.

Mr. Fahey stated he agrees with Mr. Sherrill of the ZBA that sometimes it's better to invest in the personnel rather than invest in the resulting costs of the poorly designed project that we have to live with.

Councilor Thone reiterated that reorganization of priorities and responsibilities could get the permit coordinator.

Mr. Fahey stated he thinks that would be well done if they could sit down and discuss what those priorities are. He stated there are assumptions being made as to what the priorities are and there has been no opportunity to discuss what they are in relation to the office and what the office does as a whole.

Councilor King stated the project coordinator is a highly qualified person that has been writing grants and securing grants for the community and she doesn't see her as taking on the role as a secretary. She stated that when the Department of Revenue came in 2001 to do a financial audit of the community it was the Department Revenue who recommended that the Council President and the Mayor meet so the Council President could bring that information back to the rest of the Council and share information as the point person. She stated it didn't need to be done by serial e-mail it should be done at a Council meeting during reports and Council communication so there would be no violation.

Councilor Benson stated growth management has been cited by the people of Amesbury repeatedly as a major issue. He said he believes this position is only about \$8,000 more than what is being spent currently and a much more intelligent expense. He feels this is an excellent investment and something that needs to be done and hopes the Council reverses the decision of the finance committee.

Jane Snow questioned the roll of the permitting coordinator as that of a secretary and how that person would know what to do. She said it was a worry to her and almost sounds like a legal secretary is needed.

Mr. Fahey stated currently the permit and permit process does not exist in his office. Permitting right now is by the different boards, the Planning Board, ZBA, and Con Com. The Building Inspector has the responsibility for interpreting permits and building codes, etc. He stated there is no one place right now where somebody is watching all the permits and processes for applications. He stated the person would be more than just a secretary; the person would have to have knowledge of Planning Board and Zoning Issues.

James Thivierge stated he had concerns of independence and keeping the issues separate because the Planning Board is an executive branch elected by the people and the ZBA is a quasi-judicial. He also stated he is not entirely opposed to this new position if the Town can afford it, however, any new personnel should be scrutinized.

Marc Lankin, Amesbury Public Library Director, stated the library provides important services for the community, i.e., children who need help with school work, people who are looking for work who need information on careers, and a mini library at the senior center for those who can't make it into the library building. He stated it is vital and crucial to the educational and cultural health of the community. He stated they have absorbed cuts from the Mayor and the Finance Committee has recommended minor cuts above that and he asked that the Municipal Council not cut any further.

Councilor Pinerio asked how many hours the State requires the library to stay open in order to be certified.

Mr. Lankin stated the certification requirement is fifty. He stated he explained to the finance committee the requirements have been relaxed over the last two years because a lot of libraries have been in trouble because of funding situations.

Councilor Pinerio asked how many hours the library was open now.

Mr. Lankin stated right now it is open fifty-eight and with the Mayor's cuts they will move down to fifty-four.

Councilor Pinierio stated Salisbury and Merrimac have less than fifty hours. He asked if they are certified.

Mr. Lankin explained certification is based on the size of the community. Amesbury is a larger community and therefore what Amesbury has to meet in terms of requirements is greater.

Five minute break

Councilor Lawrence called the meeting back to order. He stated public comment will be limited to three minutes.

Shirley Purdie, Resident, asked the Council to vote to accept the recommendation of Matrix Consulting Group, recommending that the Town should keep the ambulance service in-house handled by the fire department.

Thomas Schwartz, Resident spoke in favor of the finance committee recommendation not to further cut the schools. He also asked the Council in regards to the permit Coordinator and the Police Department to keep in mind the recommendations of department heads before making some of the finance committee recommendations.

Jim Babbin, Emergency Management Volunteer thanked the Council for listening. He stated everyone has concerns about the budget and everyone has an interest in it. He spoke in favor of the finance committee recommendation for no further cuts to the school department. He explained that the volunteers for emergency management have to buy some of the supplies needed to do the job themselves. He stated that his company paid for himself and another employee so that they could assist emergency management during the flood.

Tyler Ouellet, Student Representative, School Committee spoke in favor of not cutting the schools any further. He stated the Municipal Council had been sent a letter from the Student Advisory Council outlining many student grievances and issues. He stated it was on the school's website if anyone wants to see it. He cautioned against cutting benefits for teachers. As the older teachers leave and new teachers come in there should be a good working environment, competitive wages and fair treatment and without these we'll get bottom of the barrel teachers. He stated the more you cut the more you lose. He also spoke against user fees.

Libby & David Arsenault, Resident, spoke in favor of the school system and the services to meet the needs of their six year old. She stated her fear is that if the school budget is cut any further than it has proposed to have been cut the quality of education is going to suffer. Another concern is if there are any other cuts Amesbury will be a less attractive option for school choice. She asked the Council to accept the school budget as it was proposed by the school committee and accepted by the finance committee.

Karen Solstad, spoke as a member of the Planning Board in favor of the permitting coordinator. She stated the permitting coordinator would be the gatekeeper into a very complicated process due to a lot of legal constraints. She stated the Town Planner should not be acting as the gatekeeper, he should be allowed to do the work that he is supposed to be doing.

Ray Shockey, stated he is the Executive Director of Alliance for Amesbury, but had served on Planning Board for five years and was chairman for two. He spoke in favor of the permitting coordinator. He

stated the permitting coordinator would assist all boards interact would make the permitting process more efficient and more streamlined. He stated that the volunteers serving on these boards need support.

Beth Corcoran, Resident, thanked Dr. Chaurette, Dr. Jack and every member of the School Committee who volunteers their time to ensure a quality education for the next generation of adults. She asked the elected members of the Municipal Council to acknowledge the efforts put forth by the elected School Committee members by supporting the budget.

Patty Hoyt, Teacher/Resident, spoke as Department Head of the English Department of Amesbury High School. She urged the Municipal Council to look at the school budget as a living document prepared by people like her who evaluate what it is that the students need and then submit that budget to the administrators. She stated a significant number of those who work for the schools are also residents of Amesbury and when they put their budgets together they are also speaking as taxpayers. She asked for more and earlier communication with the school committee next year. On behalf of other members of the staff and parents she stated they were all encouraging the Council to support the school budget.

Pam Gilday, Resident, spoke in support of the schools and asked to vote the finance committees recommendation to fully fund the budget. She urged the Council going forward to communicate with the schools and department heads. She also spoke in favor of the permitting coordinator.

Jim Thivierge spoke in favor of eliminating user fees and eliminating Choice Out encumbrances.

Tom Iacobucci, Resident, spoke in favor of the permitting coordinator position and asked the Council to consider voting in favor of that.

Marc Deschenes, Resident, stated we pay more now for less service, whether it be fees, leaf dumping fees, bus fees, sports fees and a lot of those costs seem to him to be embroiled in contracts of which the representative body has very little input on. He said it may help to explain when you do compare other communities with a like population of town we spend forty-five percent more than the average. He said he agrees with Roger although he's not sure we need to spend a lot of money on a study but these things should be looked at because we do spend a lot of money comparatively speaking to other communities our size for our public safety, not so in education where we are right in the mix. When he looks at areas where we stand out that's definitely one of them and perhaps there are very good reasons why we do but you have to wonder if it's all necessary. He stated on the Department of Revenue there is a thing from the Schedule A called Other Expenditures. He said when compared to the three hundred and fifty-one communities, we rank number 6 in terms of that expenditure at slightly under a million dollars. It is very unclear what that Schedule A number represents in the budgeting process. He asked Mr. Basque what is in that number and stated he thinks the finance committee and the Council needs to get an understanding of what is in that number and he would like to know. He stated that Amesbury residents as far as taxpayers are some of the most generous people in the state.

Julie Regan, Amesbury resident and teacher, stated she left Corporate America three years ago earning \$95,000 and this year in Amesbury Public School system she makes \$36,000. Stated she is committed and education is where she wants to be but she's concerned especially coming from Corporate America we all need to do more with less that in the public school systems to do any more with less would be detrimental to not only the children but the teachers as well. She stated she has spent almost \$1,000 of her own money for things that she has needed in the classroom to meet the curriculum. She encouraged the Council to accept the budget as is.

President Lawrence closed the public hearing. Stated there will be a short recess but prior to that he thanked Councilor Benson for reminding the Council of the Kaufman Bylaw. The Council will move forward with the Kaufman Bylaw.

Councilor King asked President Lawrence to explain the Kaufman Bylaw for the public.

President Lawrence stated there will be a five minute break if you would like to review it at this time, Councilor.

Councilor Lavoie stated she's talking about the public.

Councilor King stated she was talking about the public and asked President Lawrence if he was not willing to answer that.

President Lawrence stated when we come back from the break.

Councilor King asked if he would address it with the public and let them know what to expect.

President Lawrence stated, yes but Councilor Benson brought up the Kaufman Bylaw if he chooses to explain it he can.

Councilor King stated you are the Council President, it's not Councilor Benson's role.

President Lawrence called the meeting back to order and stated The Kaufman Bylaw – Councilor Thone will read the recommendations of Finance Committee and all unquestioned departments will be voted at once and then will go back to each questioned department and deal with them individually.

Councilor Thone read the finance committee recommendations in full (attached).

Councilor Lavoie objected to Municipal Council Expenses

Councilors Lavoie and Benson objected to Mayor

Councilor Benson objected to Legal Services

Councilor McClure objected to Community and Economic Development

Councilor Benson objected to Planning Board

Councilor King objected to Police Department

Councilor King objected to Health Department

Councilor King objected to Other Assessments

President Lawrence read the finance recommendation of the Unquestioned Departments as follows; Reserve Fund, Administration and Finance, Assessor, Collector/Treasurer, Management Information Systems, Central Supply, Town Clerk, Elections, Liquor Commission, Conservation Commission, Board of Appeals, Municipal Buildings, Fire Department, Inspections, Weights and Measures, Emergency Management, Harbormaster, Department of Public Works, Engineering, Snow & Ice, Outdoor Lighting, Refuse and Recycling, Council on Aging, Veterans Services, Library, Debt Services, Employee Benefits, Insurance Expense, School, Landry Stadium, Sewer Department, Water Department.

Councilor Brennick moved that the unquestioned recommendations of the finance committee for adoption of FY2007 annual operating budget be each and severally adopted; that any and all unquestioned actions which they have recommended to be taken be each and severally taken and

that any and all unquestioned sums which they have recommended be raised and appropriated. Councilor Benson seconded. ROLL CALL – 9-YES

President Lawrence read the first questioned department – Municipal Council.

Councilor Lavoie moved to reduce the Municipal Council bottom line by \$500.00 for a total of \$69,350.00. Councilor Benson seconded. Roll Call – 8-Yes, 1-No, Brennick

President Lawrence read the next questioned department - Mayor

Councilor Lavoie moved to reinstate a portion of the personnel line item for a total of \$155,768.00, Expenses 14,614.00 for a total of 170,382.00. Councilor King seconded.

Councilor Thone moved to amend the motion to the finance committee recommendation of \$153,828.00, Expenses 14,614.00 for a total \$168,442.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote of the amendment 6-Yes, 3-No, Benson, Lavoie, King

Roll Call Vote of the Main motion as amended - Personnel - \$153,828.00, Expenses 14,614.00 for a total \$168,442.00 – 6-Yes, 3-No Benson, Lavoie, King

President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Legal Services

Councilor Benson stated he objected in error and did not have an objection to Legal Services.

Councilor Lavoie moved the finance committee recommendation of \$100,000.00 for Legal Services. Councilor Benson seconded.

Roll Call Vote – 9-Yes

President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Community & Economic Development

Councilor Lavoie moved to restore the \$30,000 to personnel services for the permitting coordinator and amend Personnel to \$444,260.26, Expenses 68,582.00 for a total of \$512,842.26. Councilor Benson seconded.

Roll Call Vote – 8-Yes, 1-No, Thone

President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Planning Board

Councilor Benson stated the Master Plan Committee had just hired a secretary and the cut proposed by the Finance Committee would cripple the Master Plan Committee.

Councilor Benson moved the Mayor's recommendation of \$7,900.00 for personnel services, \$8,000.00 for expenses for a total \$15,900.00. Councilor Lavoie seconded.

Councilor Thone moved to amend the motion to the finance committee recommendation of \$5,400.00 for personnel services and \$6,800.00 expenses for a total of \$12,200.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote of the amendment 5-Yes, 4-No, Benson, King, Lindstrom, Lavoie

Councilor Lindstrom moved to amend the amendment for a total bottom line of \$16,200. Councilor Benson seconded.

Roll Call Vote of the amendment to the amendment 4-Yes, 5-No, McClure, Pinierio, Thone, Brennick, Lawrence – Motion Failed

Roll Call Vote of the main motion as amended –Personnel Services- \$5,400.00, Expenses - \$6,800.00, for a total of \$12,200.00 – 5-Yes, 4-No, Benson, King, Lindstrom, Lavoie

President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Police Department

Councilor Benson moved the Mayor’s recommendation for personnel services of \$3,011,734.00. Councilor Lavoie seconded.

Councilor Thone moved to amend the motion to the finance committee’s recommendation of \$2,890,250.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote of the amendment - 6-Yes, 3-No, Benson, King, Lavoie

Roll Call Vote of the main motion as amended for personnel services \$2,890,250.00 – 6-Yes, 3-No, Benson, King, Lavoie

Councilor Connolly King moved the Mayor’s recommendation of \$261,520.00 for expenses. Councilor Lavoie seconded.

Councilor Thone moved to amend the motion to the finance committee’s recommendation of \$224,720.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote of the amendment – 6-Yes, 2-No, King, Lavoie, 1-Recuse, Benson

Roll Call Vote of the main motion as amended \$224,720.00 for expenses – 6-Yes, 2-No, King Lavoie, 1-Recuse, Benson

**Councilor Connolly King moved the Mayor’s recommendation to fund Capital at \$97,000.00
No second**

Councilor Thone moved the finance committee recommendation of Zero (0). Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote – 6-Yes, 2-No, King, Lavoie, 1-Recuse, Benson

Councilor Thone moved finance committee recommendation for a total Police Department Budget at \$3,114,970.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.

Roll Call Vote 6-Yes, 2-No, King, Lavoie, 1-Recuse, Benson

**President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Health Department
Councilor Connolly King moved to fund the Health department expenses at \$25,250.00. Councilor Pinierio seconded.**

Roll Call Vote – 9-Yes

Councilor Lavoie moved to fund the total Health Department Budget at \$183,422.60. Councilor Benson seconded.

Roll Call Vote – 9-Yes

President Lawrence read the next questioned department – Other Assessments

Councilor Connolly King asked for discussion regarding the Whittier Budget. Mr. Basque was asked what would happen if the Council voted the finance committee recommendation.

Mr. Basque stated it was level funded so that he could pay the first payment to Whittier. Whittier would have to resubmit a revised budget. The Mayor would then have to submit a supplemental budget to fund the remainder and the Council would have to approve that. The Towns that voted against it would have forty-five days to vote on it.

Councilor Benson moved the finance committee recommendation of \$729,032.00. Councilor McClure seconded.

Roll Call Vote – 9-Yes

Councilor Benson moved that the Municipal Council approve a total appropriation of \$41,308,706.88 and

That to fund said appropriation, the Municipal Council approves \$ 40,819,606.88 to be raised by taxation and other revenue sources and further that \$489,100.00 be applied from the sources detailed below:

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Sale of Cemetery Lots	\$ 24,100.00
Ambulance Receipts	287,000.00
Youth Revolving	162,000.00
Cemetery Interest	16,000.00

Further voted that the Municipal Council approves the following enterprise fund budgets:

Landry Stadium	Expenses	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	Total Landry
-----------------------	-----------------	---------------------	---------------------	---------------------

Sewer Department	Personal Services	\$ 472,969.20		
	Expenses	651,800.00		
	Other Expenses	1,232,833.00		
	Capital	140,500.00	\$ 2,498,102.20	Total Sewer
Water Department	Personal Services	\$ 640,620.40		
	Expenses	960,700.00		
	Other Expenses	810,273.00		
	Capital	182,000.00	\$ 2,593,593.40	Total Water

Therefore, the Municipal Council hereby appropriates the following:

TOTAL APPROPRIATION \$ 46,410,402.48

Councilor Donna McClure seconded. Roll Call Vote 8-Yes, 1-No, Connolly King

Councilor Benson moved to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Bonnijo Kitchin
Town Clerk**